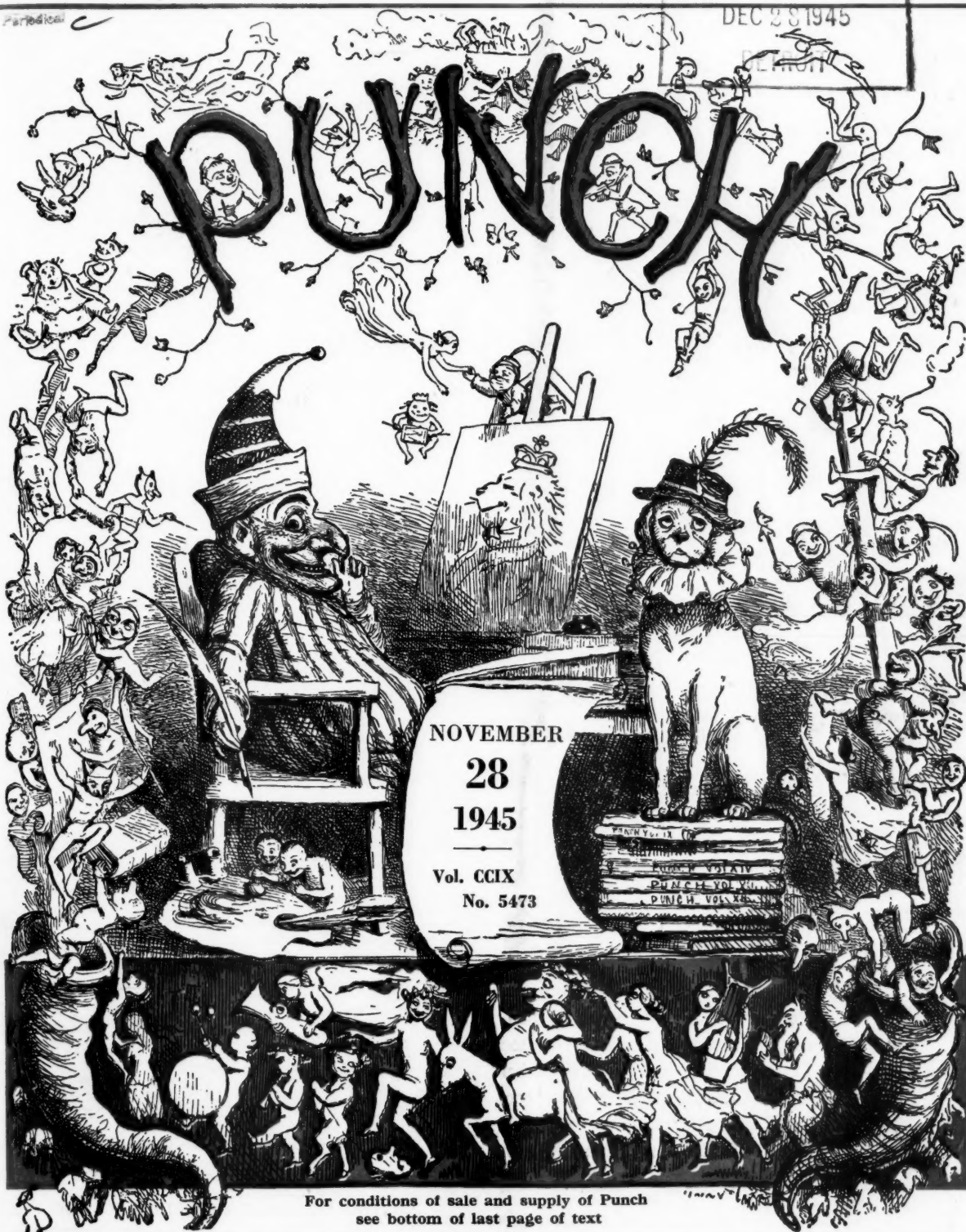


HUNTLEY & PALMERS - *the first name you think of in* BISCUITS

DEC 28 1945




For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text



Player's Please





ANTLER
The most distinguished
name in
TRAVEL GOODS

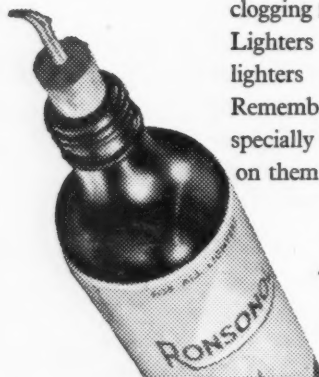
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J. B. BROOKS & CO. LTD., BIRMINGHAM

RONSONOL
is still the
world's finest
lighter fuel.



So don't be put off with substitutes. Ronsonol is the non-smoking, non-clogging fuel for instant flash. Ronson Lighters *must* have it; all other lighters work better on it, too. Remember Ronson Flints are made specially for Ronson Lighters. Insist on them.



Ronsonol 1/6d bottle, Ronson Flints 6d packet, Ronson Service Outfit 1/5d

RONSON



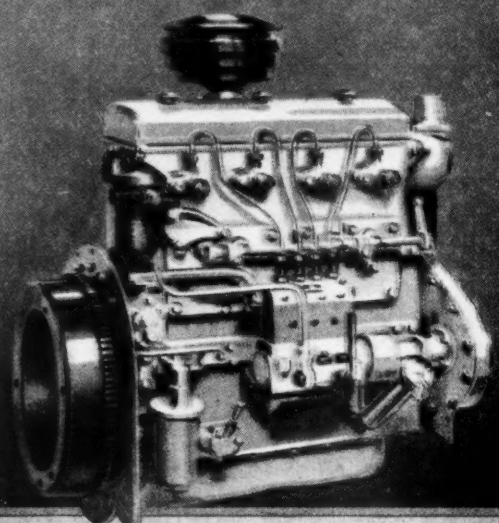
Marcovitch
BLACK AND WHITE
cigarettes for Virginia smokers

Flat 15 for 2/3 - 25 for 3/9
100 for 15/-

Also **BLACK AND WHITE**
SMOKING MIXTURE
2 oz. tin 5/10

ISSUED BY GODFREY PHILLIPS LTD

MADE BY COVENTRY CLIMAX



This Coventry Diesel engine, made by Coventry Climax, is the result of careful evolution, and develops 34 h.p. at 2,000 r.p.m. for stationary purposes, or up to 42 h.p. at 3,200 r.p.m. for transport applications.

COVENTRY DIESEL ENGINES LTD., COVENTRY

**COVENTRY
DIESEL**



A RARE TREAT THESE DAYS



No superlative could convey the truly delightful quality of VAMOUR. Skilful blending of the choice imported wines and Selected Herbs of which it is composed make VAMOUR the vermouth for the discriminating. Regrettably short supply at present, but contact your Wine Merchant—you may be fortunate. Remember, every occasion with VAMOUR is a special one.

VAMOUR
THE True VERMOUTH

Produced by
VERMOUTIERS (London) LTD.
25-28, BUCKINGHAM GATE, LONDON, S.W.1

F E L L S



Shippers of
fine wines for a century
John E. Fells & Sons Ltd., London, S.E.1

Welcome Always—
Keep it Handy
**GRANT'S
MORELLA
CHERRY
BRANDY**

* Stocks
still available
but restricted

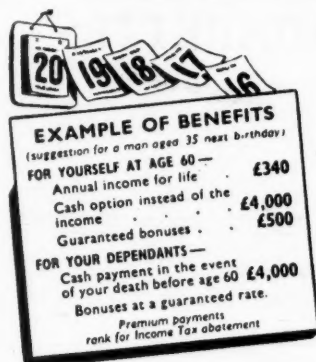


What is wrong with this picture ?

Can you trace SEVEN errors ? Hasn't the statue of Venus mysteriously grown a new arm ? And wasn't Shakespeare the author of "Henry VIII" ? Next, the card player has lost part of her collar and the card she is playing has *eleven* pips. Why two Aces of Spades in one pack ? Few patience players will miss the position of the first ace or the placing of a FIVE on the ace in the foreground. Unfortunately the presence of a box of Caley FORTUNE chocolates is also impossible. Caley's aren't yet making FORTUNE again—they're still without a factory of their own. Meanwhile good-friends in the trade are making chocolate for Caley.

CALEY CHOCOLATE

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FOR YOUR PENSION

Secure a definite
income at a chosen
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PEARL PENSION ASSURANCE

To PEARL ASSURANCE COMPANY LIMITED, HIGH HOLBORN, LONDON, W.C.1

Please let me know the annual cost of securing a yearly income of £..... at age 60/65* (other benefits proportionate).

Date of birth *Delete age not applicable.

Name (Mr., Mrs. or Miss)

Address

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**ENQUIRY
FORM**
Id. Stamp only if
envelope unsealed

PNH. 75 (28.11.45)

**Good NEWS
for everyone
who wants an**

AGA

**one-fire
COOKER and
WATER HEATER**

Aga one-fire Cookers and Water Heaters are now in steadily increasing production. And because so many people want them, we have introduced a special Personal Priority List to ensure you the earliest possible delivery of your Aga — strictly on the principle "First come, first served".

To qualify for your Aga, register on our Personal Priority List straightaway. We will send you details of Aga models, and book your name immediately with your local agent.

The Aga Heat Storage Cooker and Water Heater is the only cooking stove with a guaranteed maximum fuel consumption. It ensures that your permitted delivery of

FUEL IS USED TO THE BEST ADVANTAGE,

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The word "Aga" is the registered trade mark of Aga Heat Ltd. (Proprietors: Allied Ironfounders Ltd.)



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TOILET SOAP MAKERS
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FINE SOAPS
for Fifty Years

It is no
mere chance
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Soap is
sought after so
much.

M. BRONNLEY & CO. LTD.
LONDON, W. 1.



A Kingly Product!

SENIOR'S

FISH & MEAT PASTES

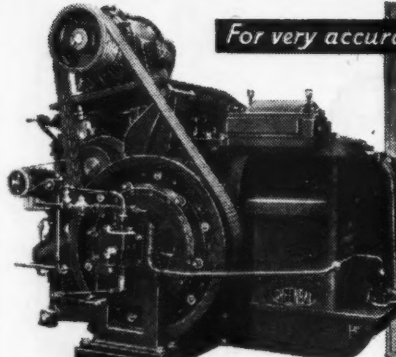
The "Antiquary"
Finest
Scotch Whisky



OF RARE
DISTINCTION
WITH THE
RIGHT AGE
COMMANDING
RESPECT:

Proprietors:
J. & W. HARDIE
SCOTLAND

For very accurate work



The sharpness and high accuracy of finished forgings is maintained by the built-in rigidity of every Greenbat Hot Forging machine.

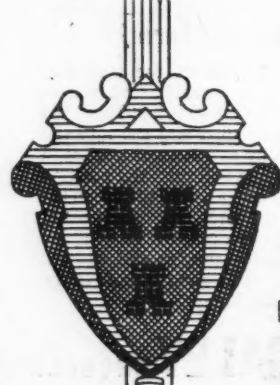
- Overhung header and die slides.
- Cam-controlled gripping action of dies.
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- Ideal for bolts, rivets, all upset work and for working in conjunction with drop-stamps.

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GREENWOOD & BATLEY LTD.
LEEDS

HOT FORGING MACHINES

M. 7



WILLS'S THREE CASTLES CIGARETTES

20 for 2/8

T.T.214.5.

ANZORA

"MASTERS THE HAIR"

*'Does not soil
hats or pillows'*



Indigestion?
Ah, Yes!
— YOU WANT

MEGGESON

BISMUTH DYSPEPSIA
TABLETS

1/6
3/10

Stains Blazing

BUT ESCAPE CERTAIN
for entire Family even from
highest floor if Automatic DAVY
is fitted. Average cost £20.
Send 1d. stamp for details.
JOHN KERR & CO. (Mkch) LTD.
Northwich, Chas.
DAVY Automatic FIRE ESCAPE



RHEUMATISM

Rheumatism—however mild your symptoms—exact a merciless toll in pain and expense if not checked in time. Poisons and impurities in your system are usually the cause of rheumatic disorders. To get rid of these poisons, doctors recommend the drinking of mineral spa waters. But a visit to a spa involves time and expense that many people simply cannot afford these days.

'Alkia' Saltrates may be described as a spa treatment in your own home. It contains the essential curative qualities of seven world-famous springs and has the same beneficial effect on the system at a fraction of the cost and without the inconvenience of travelling to an actual spa. A teaspoonful of 'Alkia' Saltrates in warm water before breakfast each morning soon relieves pain. Taken regularly, this pleasant, effervescent drink dissolves impurities in the blood-stream and greatly assists the kidneys to eliminate them from the system, thus helping to prevent recurring attacks of rheumatism.

A bottle of 'Alkia' Saltrates costs 3/9 (inc. Purchase Tax). Get one from your chemist to-day and begin your spa treatment to-morrow morning.

ROSS'S

BELFAST

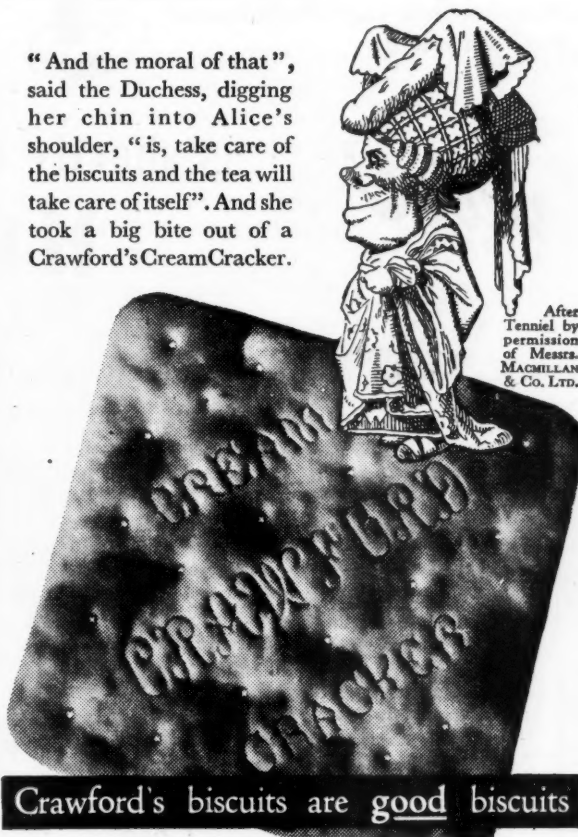
GINGER ALE
SODA WATER
TONIC WATER

LIME JUICE CORDIAL
LEMONADE
GRAPE FRUIT

Will return in sparkling form



"And the moral of that", said the Duchess, digging her chin into Alice's shoulder, "is, take care of the biscuits and the tea will take care of itself". And she took a big bite out of a Crawford's Cream Cracker.



Crawford's biscuits are good biscuits



When "Golden Shred" reappears upon the breakfast table you will know that **The World's Best Marmalade** is being made again Until then the Marmalade to buy is **J.R.**

James Robertson & Sons (P.L.) Ltd.
Golden Shred Works
London, Paisley, Manchester, Bristol.



A TRADITION AND
A Very Special Treat

A century-long tradition for Quality makes Farrah's Original Harrogate Toffee the instinctive choice when you wish to send sweets that will be "a very special treat."

During zoning you can buy direct. Prices (including postage) 3/1 for 1 lb.; 5/7 for 1 1/2 lb.

TOFFEE

Have YOU a 'FAIRY' in your home?

The ESSE FAIRY No. 3, with one fire, always alight, combines heat storage cooking with hot water supply, at a fuel cost amazingly low. Burns solid smokeless fuel.



THE ESSE COOKER COMPANY

Proprietors: SMITH & WELLSTOOD LTD. Established 1854
Head Office & Works: BONNYBRIDGE, STIRLINGSHIRE
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Surely- to Goodness!

Surely to goodness, we feel, the days will come when we may buy all the new things we want in 'Celanese' . . . and even lovelier than ever before. Readjustment from war limitations to peace-time plenty will take time — but it will surely come.

'Celanese'

TRADE MARK

G.285



Who would guess
... she'd been on
her feet all day?

Come what may, when the day's work is done, she has energy to spare. Her ARCH PRESERVER shoes keep her daily routine free from foot fatigue. More women, these active days, depend on ARCH PRESERVERS' famous features:

- Steel arch bridge for firm support.
- Individually placed metatarsal pad for comfort.
- Perfectly flat innersole for comfort-plus.



REGENT

Selberite
**ARCH
PRESERVER**



Shoes



is shortly to be released!

HEINZ

57 VARIETIES

Always ready to serve



FOUR SQUARE is still made, as ever, from pure tobacco—matured and mellowed by ageing in the wood; free from artificial scents and flavouring.

GEORGE DOBIE & SON LTD., PAISLEY, SCOTLAND

One of the few remaining independent Tobacco firms, established 136 years ago.



PUNCH

or

The London Charivari



Vol. CCIX No. 5473

November 28 1945

Charivaria

A MATCH which strikes at either end is a great success in America and bears out the truth of the old proverb that two heads are better than one.

Housewives are disappointed to find that Yuletide commodities are in short supply again this year. They had been dreaming of a white market Christmas.



A sale of lost property was held at a London railway station. For the time being the proceeds of such sales go to the railway companies.

A daily paper explains that a grocer is bound to replace a bad egg. But not of course in the box marked "New Laid."

"He won the M.C. for leading mules through tunnels in Crete under German noses. He says that at the time he thought: 'What a wonderful role for Gary Cooper!'" — *Daily Mail*.
He hadn't heard of Errol Flynn, perhaps.

At Cardiff, each member of the Russian football team was presented with a silver miniature miner's lamp as a souvenir. A charming thought that didn't occur to Mr. Bevin regarding his boys.

Demobilization Hold-up Continues.

"GREETINGS TO SERVICE MEN
Loving Birthday Greetings to dear Granddad, on your 86th birthday."
Local paper.

The Minister of Health has put forward a case for erecting skyscrapers in the country. This will give many backward places a lift.

Many people who have shopped early for Christmas, as requested, now complain that there is nothing attractive in the shops for Easter.

"A late report last night said that the storm in the Straits was increasing rapidly, and rain squalls and fierce gusts were whipping the sea into a boiling cauldron." — *Irish paper*.
Landladies been overcharging again?

In view of the excessive prices still being obtained for very old furniture the Board of Trade are seriously considering the possibility of producing utility antiques.

A Kirby Cross woman is still using the same packet of needles she bought in 1912. The tunes have different titles now.



Shopkeepers are now permitted to parcel up goods as they did before the war. We shall continue to take our own paper, unless the word "compelled" is substituted.

A more promising sign of the return of the world to normal conditions is the revival of the French political crisis.

One of the Government's worst headaches is the provision of permanent office accommodation for its temporary housing officials.

"We are now doing Shakespeare's version of *The Tempest*."
Schoolgirl's letter.
Approved. It's easily the best.

Professional footballers in this country recently threatened to strike. Their complaint was that they got more kicks than halfpence.



Sense of the Press

VAST indignation has been aroused in the House of Commons by the proposal of the Government to nationalize fun before the Christmas Recess.

The precise details of the Bill are at present unknown, but it is believed that the principal subjects to receive priority of treatment will include:

Beer, Water In	Indians Sleeping on Spikes
Milk do.	Fratrization
Desert Islands	Fish
Burglars	Mothers-in-law
Bus Queues	The Shortage of Cigarettes

A special Department of the Home Office will be set up, and not more than one joke referring to any of these topics will be allotted to any single variety entertainment or issue of any periodical, unless a special permit has been obtained. For this permit an application must be made in advance, setting out in detail the course which the joke proposes to follow and the amount of laughter required. The situation seems grave.

* * * * *

It is now quite clear that the Kurdish Helma team which was due to play against Wandsworth at the Whackington Institute last Saturday has disappeared in the fog.

After a high tea, consisting of caviar and vodka, they left the Rechabite Hotel in Bloomsbury, which is now their headquarters, and set out eastwards carrying only their boards and pieces, their national flag (with the emblem of a gold scimitar and the motto "Kurd's Way"), bunches of chrysanthemums, and side-arms, but nothing more has been heard of them. They are said to be indignant that several West Ham players were included in the Wandsworth team. Two maiden ladies, who had come all the way from Leeds to watch the encounter and had sat up all night on camp-stools outside the Town Hall, fainted from disappointment and fatigue, and the manager of the team, Mr. Seraphski, has visited Mr. Bevin at the Foreign Office to demand an explanation. The situation is becoming acute.

* * * * *

A correspondent who is in trouble with his telephone writes to us as follows:

"Could any more scandalous instance of the incompetence of our bureaucracy be found than the following? Having taken a new house, I was suddenly informed that my number HOG 6699 must be altered to HOG 6969. I protested. I pointed out that my present number had been circulated to all my friends. The reply was that HOG 6699 had an unpaid outstanding account, and until it was paid the number HOG 6699 must be regarded as dead. This dialogue then ensued:

Myself. Am I a human being, or a number?

Operator. Kindly repeat.

Myself. A man's a man for a' that.

Operator. Kindly repeat.

Myself. A man's a man for a' that.

Operator. Baht 'at?

Myself. No, a' that. Burns.

Operator. Burns what?

Myself. Burns watts.

Yet apparently, I have no redress, and as HOG 6969 I must henceforward be known."

Cheer up, HOG! In our opinion a telephone service that has brought us through the greatest war of all time must be regarded as part and parcel of our rough island story, and it is probably our national telephone system that has made us, for worse or better, what we are. Have you thought of keeping your telephone in the garden?

* * * * *

The deadlock in Palestine continues. This is due to the High Commissioner's new order that every Arab cultivator who has a spare room must take into the family a Jewish lodger. Many Arabs have boarded up their spare room windows, and intend to resist the edict by force. British troops have been instructed to break down all such barricades as gently as possible with mattocks. As *The Times* puts it, "Repercussions may be expected of a nature which cannot fail to arouse sentiments akin perhaps not to uneasiness, but at least to some measure of dubiety." These are grave words, especially when taken in conjunction with the remark made by a Surrey lance-corporal at Tel Aviv, who, asked to sum up the situation, replied simply but vehemently, "Cor."

It is thought that H.M. Government may eventually be called upon to implement their pledges, or, failing that, to pledge their implements. The situation grows increasingly difficult.

* * * * *

Two million men and fifty thousand women will be demobilized in time to receive a free gift of turkeys before December 25th. The turkeys will be sent in powder form from the U.S.A.

* * * * *

The only outstanding difference between our representatives and those of the American Government with regard to the Loan is understood to be our request that if we are unable to pay the interest we should not do so. President Truman is quite willing to comply with our request, but it is expected that the proposal will have a stormy reception when placed before Congress. The reason for this is not clear, but the whole situation is fraught with alarm.

* * * * *

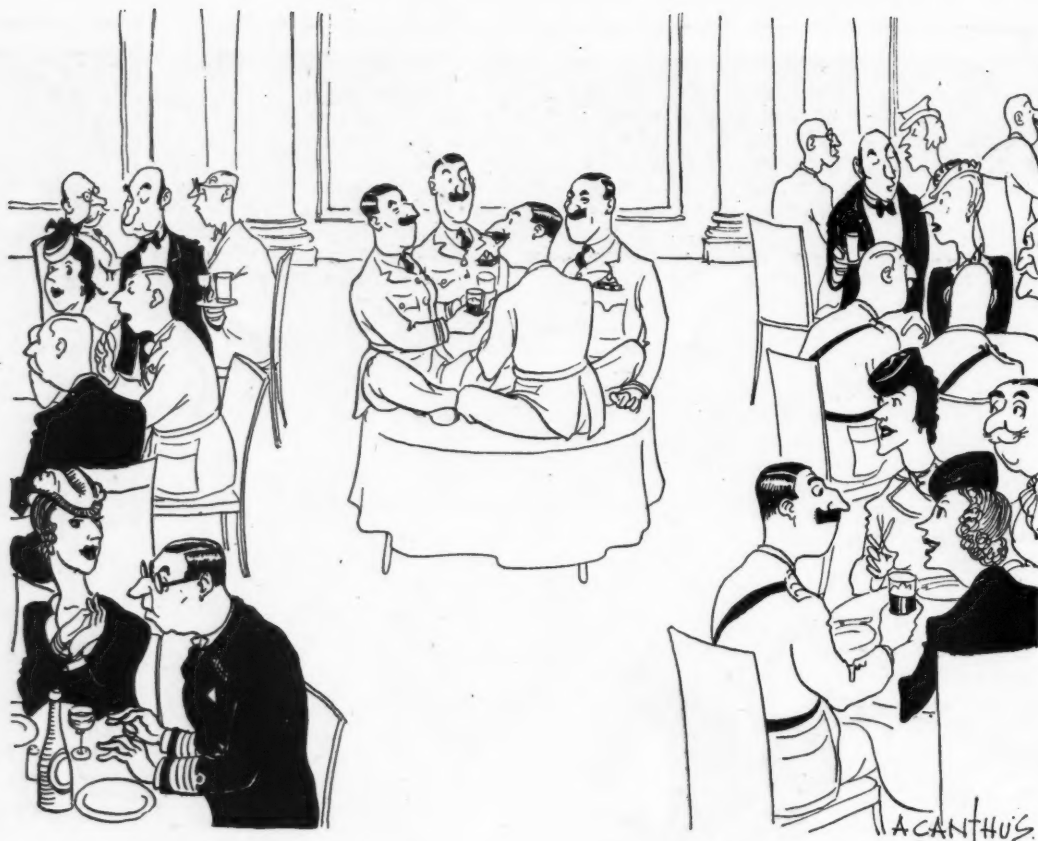
Our expedition against the Dyak Head-hunters still meets with success, but little progress is being made in Portuguese East Africa, where a half platoon of the Sherwood Foresters was recently ambushed by leopard-men and carried off into the Congo hinterland. News is expected hourly, but the situation is not improved by the fact that a prominent local chieftain stated recently in a radio message, "Thailand and the Congo are the only genuine first-class Powers."

STOP PRESS

The Kurdish Helma players have been discovered in Hampstead. They have seized a local library and issued a statement that they will only play Helma against a team selected by themselves. Terror reigns. EVOE.



THE HUNT IS UP.



"They met exactly two years ago on a float in the Channel."

Assistant Masters : Are They Insane?

Wentworth Re-enters the Cupboard.

(Mr. Charles Gilbert, a colleague of A. J. Wentworth, the mathematics master, has been good enough to send me the following notes of a curious sequel to the fishing episode in the boot-room. They may be of interest as illustrating a certain pertinacity in Mr. Wentworth's character.)

ANYBODY who has known Wentworth for more than a couple of minutes is aware that however much of a clown he makes of himself, whatever fantastic predicament he gets into, he will not leave the thing alone. He will not rest until he has proved to his own satisfaction, and attempted to convince everybody else, that the whole affair was perfectly natural really. If he was found hanging by his braces from the dome of St. Paul's (and nobody here would be the least surprised to hear of it) he would put it down to negligence on the part of the Dean, coupled with a certain amount of sheer bad luck on his own part. "In attempting," he would say, "to make my way out of the Whispering Gallery I had the misfortune to catch my foot . . ."

Undoubtedly it was this feeling that led Wentworth to give a demonstration to the Headmaster of the way in which he got snared in my fishing-line, and to show how inevitably this mischance compelled him to climb on to the lockers in the boot-room, with my rod in his hand and his coat, firmly hooked, gasping out its life on the floor.

Rawlinson and I knew nothing about this demonstration, as a matter of fact, until just before it was due to begin. We happened to be talking to Wentworth, who was hanging about outside the cupboard by the Common Room door, when the Headmaster came along.

"Ah, Wentworth," he said. "I see you've got quite a gathering for it."

"Gilbert and Rawlinson are just off for a walk, sir," Wentworth explained.

"No hurry," I said, "if we can be of any use."

"Well, Gilbert," old Saunders said, "you ought to be present, as it was your rod," and he explained, not without a certain difficulty in controlling his voice, what Wentworth was going to do.

So we saw the whole thing.

Wentworth began with a long rigmarole, which I cannot attempt to follow in detail, about his umbrella. The upshot of it seemed to be that as he didn't want it the sensible thing to do was to come up in the dark and look for it in the games cupboard. Asked by Rawlinson whether he

kept his umbrella in the games cupboard, he said "Of course not," which settled that point. Then he went into the cupboard, still talking.

"You can imagine, Headmaster, that when I lost the use of my torch it was pitch dark in here. It is pretty dark in here now, even by day, as you can see."

We all crowded into the cupboard after him, to see just how dark it was, and Rawlinson, with a stroke of genius, shut the door "in order to reproduce as closely as possible the actual conditions." It was now very dark indeed, and we were jammed so tightly together that I could distinctly feel old Saunders shaking all over with suppressed laughter. I was, as a matter of fact, shaking myself.

"What did you do then, Wentworth?"

"My first thought naturally, Headmaster, was to get some light, and I therefore made my way—I beg your pardon, sir."

"It's all right," said Rawlinson, "that was *my* foot."

"If we could have a little light—Ah! What's this?" There was a slight clatter and almost simultaneously I was butted violently by Wentworth, who appeared to be sweeping the floor with his hands.

"Let go my leg," cried the Headmaster suddenly, and immediately burst into uncontrollable laughter. Only Wentworth was still able to speak and he, in rather a querulous voice, kept asking why somebody didn't open the door.

Somebody did, from the outside, and we heard the indignant voice of Miss Coombes (our music lady) demanding "What are you boys doing in there? Come out at once!"

I doubt if a more sheepish lot ever trailed out of a cupboard than the Headmaster and staff of Burgrove Preparatory School.

"Why, Mr. Saunders!" she cried. "I—I'm sorry to—to have interrupted you, but I thought perhaps—"

It was an awkward little scene. Only Wentworth, who has been through too much, I suppose, to be concerned about a straightforward situation like this, looked altogether at ease.

"I've got it, you see, Miss Coombes," he said, flourishing his umbrella. "I had an idea it might be in there, all along."

When Miss Coombes had left us, very red in the face, the Headmaster rounded on Wentworth.

"So that's what you had round my ankle, you old rascal. You would have had me over if there had been any room to fall down in."

Wentworth pointed out gravely that there had of course been more room on the night he had first looked for his umbrella. "I was by myself, you see," he explained, and we agreed that this was just as well.

The rest of the demonstration went off almost without a hitch. We got him hooked up, as directed, and off he went with a March Brown firmly anchored in his coat at the back and my rod clasped in his right hand—exactly as on the night, except that he was not on that occasion carrying his umbrella as well.

He showed us how, on entering the boot-room in search of the light-switch, he had raised the point of the rod too high and so, as ill-luck would have it, got the top of the line looped round the hasp on the fanlight. He had first become aware of this, "you will understand, Headmaster," when he felt a jerk and heard more line screaming off the reel; and he demonstrated the jerk and the scream most convincingly. But he failed to notice, and we hardly liked to point out, that on this occasion the reel had overrun, so that a loop of slack line was left hanging between the reel and the first eye on the rod.

I need hardly say that Wentworth put his foot through this loop. It is a fairly easy thing to do, but nobody could have done it more easily than he did.

"Hullo!" he said. "I'm caught."

"Did this happen when—on the night?" we asked.

"No. Oh, no," he said, smiling. "This is an unrehearsed effect."

He was standing on one leg now, trying to scrape the line off his right calf with the point of his umbrella. When he began to lose his balance I had a moment's uneasiness, for I feared he might put his right foot down too abruptly trying to save himself and thereby snap the point of the rod. But I need not have worried. With the umbrella between his legs he never had a chance, and after spinning right round twice like a top he had to confess himself beaten and went down with all hands into the boot-basket.

With tears streaming down our cheeks we rushed to his assistance.

"Are you hurt, old chap?" I asked, as soon as I could speak.

"No, no," he said, struggling to get up. "I am all right, thank you. But I am worried about my umbrella."

"You said that the first time," cried the Headmaster, and rushed off hooting, I regret to say, like a madman.

We could hear him far off down the corridor beating his knees with his hands and repeating at intervals in a kind of strangled shriek, "He's worried about his umbrella! Oh, my Lord, he's *still* worried about his umbrella!"

H. F. E.

First Snow

ONE touch of snow upon my cheek
unseals my sight:
my dazzled eyes
know wonder and the new surprise
my childhood knew.
With fresh delight
I watch the spindrift-whirling flakes
fall, balance, fall and balance, and seek
an airy equilibrium,
infinitesimal, delicate.
I turn my face up to the skies—
the air is all illuminate,
the snowflakes wanton-blind as Fate
against it,
urgent, hurrying, dumb
foam-flecks on a Milky Way in spate.

But these are adult images:
the fallen snow makes smooth the sharp
familiar lines of wall and hedge,
muffles and blurs the roof's steep scarp,
fills every crevice, rounds each ledge
new-plumes the cock on the weather vane,
and spreads a quilted counterpane
on every field.
And lo! and lo!
it is not smooth, new-fallen snow
not dead, blank, cotton-wool-like white
for violet shadow and mauve light
irradiate the lovely stuff
if you look closely.
Snow is rough
of texture,
snow is warm, not cold,
and makes your blood to sing and glow
when you are young.

And when you're old?
With all your eyes, look at the snow! R. C. S.

My Eiderdown

MY eiderdown is oblong and the colour of a woolly flower beginning with C whose name I have forgotten, and in the north-west corner, if viewed from the pillow, there is the famous stain where my Uncle Henry overturned a plate of tomato soup on first hearing the news of the relief of the British forces at Kimberley. The secret of its remarkable preservation through so long a life lay in my Aunt Fanny's passion for buying things, using them for a day or two and then locking them up in black tin boxes on which her name, the nature of the contents and the date of their incarceration were painted in large white letters. My Uncle Henry was often seized by what seemed a reasonable fear that she would do the same by him, but in fact, by the exercise of the utmost care, he succeeded in surviving her. She was often pressed for an explanation of her strange practice, and would always reply that things abroad looked very black; though a mere disquiet about foreign policy seemed slender justification for a collection which ranged over a vast field of egg whisks, diamonds, bootlaces and the heaviest calibre of woollen combinations. It was really very bad luck on those of us who came after that Kimberley, a sharp attack of my uncle's gout, a chance selection of so lethal a soup and the brief appearance in action of the eiderdown should all have come together as they did.

It is not, however, the historic aspect of my eiderdown that I wish to obtrude on the reading public, but the more urgent problem of keeping it in its place (a problem to which Mr. Punch has already given his attention pictorially). Others may be suffering as I am. And I think there can be no question but that its place is on my bed and not mulling about on the floor.

An eiderdown, if you come to think about it, is put in a position of great thermostatic trust, and if, having lured its charge into a warm, untroubled slumber it leaves him to awake a miserable prey to the elements, then it appears to me to have forfeited all claim to be called the friend of man. Aunt Fanny's legacy has cynically abandoned me to the horrors of the English night on so many occasions now that I can only guess that nearly half a century of sharing a black tin box with a number of pepper mills and about a furlong of pink elastic has

warped its spirit. I have known undisciplined eiderdowns before, but this is something in quite a different category, and I suppose if I had been born somewhere else in the world I should be convinced that Aunt Fanny had become part of it and that nepotal piety demanded she be given a decent run for her money. For it was her money, and not Uncle Henry's. But, however I had felt, I should have been obliged to do something about it, for awakening a shivering wreck in the small hours night after night has played frightful havoc with my nasal machinery, and there can be no place in society for a man with what has come to be widely known and feared as my eiderdown sneeze.

Desperate, I took my sneeze in a closed car to an Ear, Nose and Throat. While I was waiting on the doorstep it broke loose. All up the other side of Harley Street the windows rattled, and the industrial haze of anæsthetic which hangs over that sinister quarter shifted perceptibly towards the Zoo.

"I am a pariah," I informed the E.N.T.

"Good," he replied cheerfully. "Now at last I know how to pronounce that word."

"I wish I did," I said. "I have brought you my sneeze. Have you an instrument here for measuring sneezes?"

"It has gone to be re-bored," he said, looking round his armoury, and I then told him my strange story.

"I think you're making heavy weather of this," he said, flicking a piece of surgical wadding off his beautifully creased trousers. "We all sneeze."

"You don't understand," I cried. "My sneeze has an initial thrust which makes the jet engine obsolete."

"I strongly recommend all my patients to sneeze," he said. I took his advice immediately and a pleasant little bit of Ming dived off the mantelpiece on to the tiles below. Sir Uvula's mien hardened. "Have you tried binding this eiderdown tightly to the bed?"

"I have, and the result was a nightmare I do not wish to repeat in which I was a registered parcel of salmon trout. I got left for three weeks in a siding at Dumfries."

"Have you tried turning to the right and left alternately so as not to disturb it?"

"I've tried all that," I said impatiently. At that moment my nose

puckered slightly, and a second later I was on my way.

"It isn't really a doctor you want," cried Sir Uvula soothingly, "but a good upholsterer," and the door shut while I was still fumbling with my cheque-book.

The upholsterer was a wizened man. He had a kind mouth full of pins. Halfway through my tale he held up his hand.

"You don't need to tell me no more," he said. "You can't do nothing with a rogue eiderdown but burn it."

"Rogue eiderdown?"

"You 'eard. Every few years I get one in. Nothing, did I say? There's one thing you can do. Line the underneath with sandpaper."

"What happens to my chin on cold nights?" I asked.

"That's what they all say," he murmured, and turned to pick up his pins.

Inspiration suddenly swept over me.

"Could you fix a roller-blind to the end of a bed?" I asked.

"Um."

"And could you fix my eiderdown instead of the blind?"

"Um."

"Good," I said. "While you're doing that I can sew a hook to the top edge and some rings up the middle of my outside blanket. AUTUMN shall be embroidered by the one halfway up and WINTER by the one just under my chin."

"If it come on real cold you could take the 'ook in your mouth."

"Why not?"

The old man stamped his foot with delight.

"Cor! That ought to teach 'im!"

I rather think it will. ERIC.

Marvels of Science

The Rudeometer

(From our Special Correspondent)

THE RUDAR INSTITUTE,
BOFFINCESTER

REVEALED yesterday was a dramatic new step in the forward march of civilization when physicist Sir Lancelot Boggal gave in an interview the first details of the Rudeometer.

Here are the expert's answers to the questions everyone is asking:

Q. What's all this about a rudeometer?

A. The rudeometer is a device which works on the principles of



It's easy enough for the average private to pose for his photograph—



but promotion—



presents—

Rudar, the scientific system of measuring rudeness.

Q. Is rudeness a new thing?

A. No. Rudeness dates back to a period before rationing. Some historians claim that traces of it are evident as far back as the pre-Bureaucratic era; but with the advent of Total War it has become available in greatly increased quantity, and Science has now made possible its exact measurement.

Q. Can anybody have a rudeometer?

A. The instrument, which is a purely British invention, is still on the semi-secret list in this country. It is, however, in mass-production in the United States of America, where it is hoped to equip every housewife with a model by next January and where it will be available in the spring for the under-privileged generally.

Q. When do you think it will be available here?

A. It should be available some time during the next five years. For Export.

Q. Oh. Well. Well, what does it look like?

A. The instrument is housed in a small container not unlike a cigar-box—I should say, a dried-egg carton. It may be concealed in the shopping-bag, wrapped up in a newspaper or placed unobtrusively on the desk of the local municipal official. At one end is a perforated aperture or hole called the Collector through which pass any Rudar vibrations that the atmosphere may contain.

Q. Isn't that rather a strain on the instrument?

A. The Mark II model incorporates a "beaming" device whereby individual or departmental rudeness may be measured as desired. A fuse is brought into the circuit to obviate the dangers of overloading.

Q. Can it differentiate between varying kinds of rudeness?

A. Tests have proved that it is possible to measure the difference between a rude tobacconist with cigarettes and a rude tobacconist without cigarettes. Similar results were obtained from a cross section of fish-mongers during the zoning scheme.

Q. Has it been tried out in a Food Office?

A. Food offices were utilized in the experimental stage for testing the measurement of Silent Rudeness. A maximum reading was obtained from the back view of a female clerk in the spring of 1943.

Q. Can the rudeometer be adapted to peace conditions?

A. Yes. Freedom from rudeness has no place in the Atlantic Charter. Experts forecast no diminution in the flow of rudeness for a considerable time to come. Maximum recordings are promised at the Peace Conferences.

Q. What of the future?

A. What future?

Q. The future of this Rudar business?

A. Rudar is in its infancy. Rudeologists the world over are grappling with the problems of harnessing this immense source of energy for productive work. Rudeoturbines are promised which will drive ocean-going liners ten times round the world without stopping.

Q. What for?

A. Science is not in a position to answer that question.

Q. Is there any limit to this kind of thing?

A. None whatever.

o o

"CAR, suitable workman, about £800."

"Wanted" advt. in "Birmingham Gazette."

Any chance one, suitable journalist, about £80?



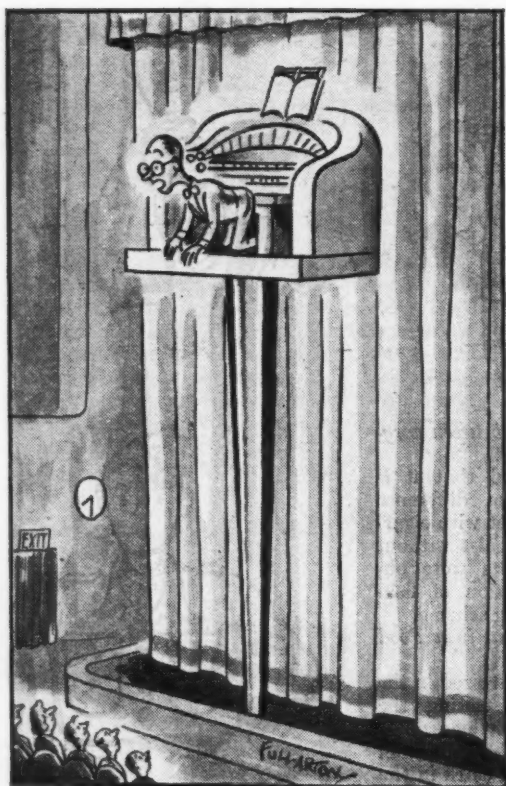
a few—



more—



difficulties.



"Is there an engineer in the house?"

Ballade of Neglected Chores

THIS is the hall, good agent (mark the gong),
And this the bathroom (note the medicine-chest).

Here are the cellars—but the key is wrong;
And there the garden—but I am not dressed.
Nay, probe no further, nor extend your quest
To view the pillow where I nightly lay
The tuneful brow, and dream the lyric jest.
I have not even made my bed to-day.

I may not forth to swell the busy throng
With such a load of conscious guilt oppressed;
The ways shall mourn unsweetened by my song,
The various queues can wait my riper hest.
The rolling eyeball and the labouring breast
My awful secret would perforce bewray;
The veriest babes would shout that they have guessed
I have not even made my bed to-day.

I cannot do it; I am far from strong,
And brains are things I never much professed.
A wiser man had lain there all day long
And spared his frailties this revealing test.

Ah, come, my dove! reseek your widowed nest!
The fault was mine, my wits were all astray.
Without you I am nothing at the best;
I have not even made my bed to-day.

Envoi.

Prince, pray control this minatory zest,
Nor more recount in your proverbial way
On what rough couch the improvident must rest.
I have not even made my bed to-day. M. H. L.

A Scrap of Paper

FAR be it from me to trespass on the well-preserved preserves of a more economically expert writer in these variegated pages; but to show you to what a by no means pretty pass the phrase "far be it from me to" has come, I would ask you to take note that you are utterly astonished and probably a little aggrieved now that I actually go on *without* referring to economics.

I admit, all the same, that my subject does spring indirectly (like an intoxicated grasshopper) from a recent gesture by the Board of Trade. The slight relaxation of the paper restrictions as a result of which shopkeepers may now wrap things, if they have any things to wrap, removes at the same time—you may have noticed—the ban on the starting of small new periodicals. If I were to start a small new periodical, and nothing would interfere more with my peace of mind or seems to me less likely, what sort of small new periodical would it be best for me to start?

A friend of mine who knows a lot of proverbs—he can read, and found them in a book—says "*Il pane degli altri ha sette croste*," meaning, so he says, "Others' bread has seven crusts"; but it is of course highly unlikely that he would say so in this connection, unless I underestimate the subtlety of his intelligence.

Well, I might start what they call a Serial Miscellany, with a long essay on the philosophical message of Hölderlin, and another on the pictorial symbolism of Rilke; with some hitherto unpublished maxims written in the time of Vauvenargues (who was very generous with his time) by people who believed they could do it just as well; with some newly discovered letters from Rilke, and some more from old Not-to-be-Outdone Hölderlin; with a play in verse by William of Occam, and an examination by somebody of George Robey's debt to Euripides; with some newly-discovered designs by Blake for what would have been a film of Berkeley's Collected Sermons, if films had been invented and Berkeley's Sermons had offered opportunities sufficiently pictorial; with stories by all the newer writers, and poems by all the newer poets, and a dust-wrapper design by all the newer artists, and portraits of Rilke, Hölderlin, Kierkegaard, and Jacob Grimm, who was responsible for the Law concerning the change (about the first century) of early explosive consonants in Teutonic; and with a subscription form (Cut This Out) in which alternate commas had been inserted by, respectively, Cocteau and Gide. But this of course would have stiff covers and would count as a book, being only a way of getting round the prohibition of small new periodicals.

Or I might start a monthly review, and I have indeed got so far as to design the Table of Contents:

"Are We Getting Older? GEORGE BIMBLE, F.S.A.

The People: Who Are They Kidding? ADRIAN GUPP
McSNOOTIE

How Is It Dope, If At All? LEONORA ZONE
 Where Are The Wives? Professor CLAMBAKE
 Nottingham Forest—Whither? J. H. H. COOPWITTEN
 What? What? What? 'Doc' TRINAIR
 When Communism Rules—How Now? A. O. PEEFINGLE

The Inquiring Gasman. 'Ask Me Another.' Questions to Readers' Answers. Query Corner. Reviews, etc. (curiosity permitting). If unsolicited contributions are sent without accompanying stamped addressed envelopes, are we expected to return them? Where to? Can you imagine where our Publishing Office is? There's not much point in announcing the price when you've read through all the small type down as far as this, is there? What do you suppose is the Postmaster-General's motive for registering a damn great thing the size of this as a newspaper?"

Confronted with this Contents List my proverb-quoting friend might well say "Heller, steh auf, lass den Eulden niedersitzen," proceeding to translate it as "Stand up, farthing, let the florin sit down"—always provided that he wished to make a remark so completely inappropriate to the occasion. But he might, you know: he's like that. Once, consulted for his opinion in the middle of a serious discussion about the potentialities of the sidereal clock, he enunciated after long reflection the words "A man could make quite a good thing of buying utility pencils, taking the lead out, and selling bits of it in little glass tubes at sevenpence-halfpenny a go."

Well, there is another alternative for my small new periodical: a weekly review of politics, literature, art, politics, entertainment, and politics. Of course I don't know enough about Russia, but who does? What views were expressed I don't think would matter much; the vast majority of the people who buy the first number of a new paper do so out of curiosity, and the rest are divided (which is why they fall) into two groups—those who get it because they know they will agree with it, and those who get it because they know they won't. Between the beginning and the end of this paragraph I have lost interest in them.

This leaves very little for me to start in the way of a small new periodical except a daily paper, and—well—I don't know—of course you'll think me silly, but—well, for one thing it means being up so late at night. Besides, even with the help of all the other papers I never seem to find out what's going on. Why, do you know the first I heard about the diamond wedding of Mr. and Mrs. J. Smith, of 364 Limpopo Road, S.E.32, was one night five days afterwards—five days afterwards—when a man quite casually whispered the news to me behind his hand in a pub?

I have now decided not to start a small new periodical. If I get hold of any more paper I shall fold it into a wad and wedge the short leg of my writing-table with it; for (as I have sometimes said to my proverb-quoting friend) few rolling stones will gather if one sells one's birthright for a pettage of moss.

The word "pettage" is my own invention, and means "the state of being a pet." I think it is good sometimes to say something to my friend that he can't see any sense in either.

R. M.

How to Make a Public Purse out of a Barking Ferret

"The hounds may bark but the caravan moves on. But it is up to us and the politicians in this country to see that the barking hounds ferret out the fox and the caravan moves without this very heavy wear and tear on the public purse."

Ceylon paper.

THE CHANGED CONDITIONS OF BRITAIN

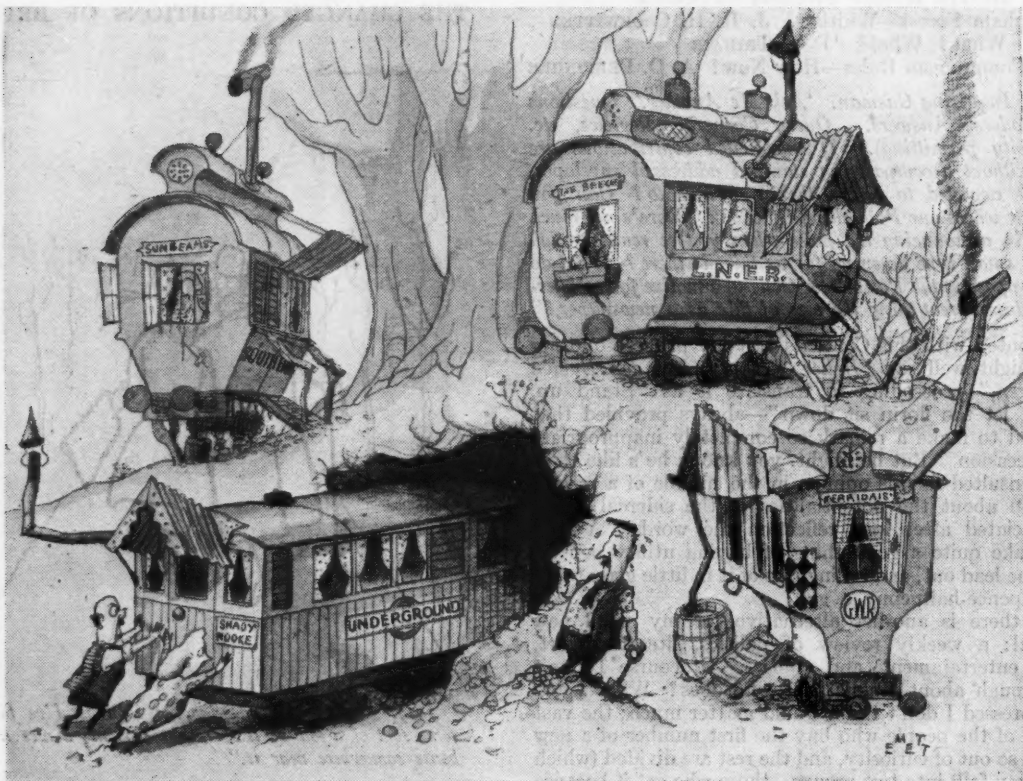
1919.



1919. "And then, darling, as soon as I've found some sort of a job we'll set about choosing a nice little bouse somewhere near it."



1945. "And then, darling, as soon as we've found some sort of a bouse I'll set about choosing a nice little job somewhere near it."



The Battle of the Bus

BESS Brown, the bus conductress,
By Shillibeer* she swore
To carry four-and-fifty fares
And not a fraction more:
By Shillibeer she swore it,
And donned her little cap
And took her little sandwich tin
And neatly packed her luncheon in
And shut it with a snap.

A million bolted breakfasts,
A million postman's knocks,
A million eyes in wild surmise
Upon a million clocks;
A million hurried kisses,
A million clicking gates—
In square and street, two million feet
In mad tattoo the pavements beat,
And dainty threes and fours compete
With sevens and with eights.

Fast speeds the lithe accountant
And fast the livid clerk,
Though dull with sleep the tellers leap
Like lightning off the mark;

* Ran the first omnibus in London

As rolls a mammoth army,
As seethes a herring shoal,
The short, the long, the weak, the
strong,
The fat, the thin, a mighty throng
Thunders towards its goal.

The queue is turning ugly,
For who shall hope to ride
When fifty-four, from battle sore,
Are resting safe inside?
See where the bold conductress
Confronts the angry crowd—
"Another bus is close at hand
But, come what may, you shall not
stand,
It cannot be allowed."

Then forth there stood a merchant
In garments rich and rare,
With gleaming spat and bowler hat
And autocratic air;
He did not stoop to parley,
To plead or to beseech,
But bending down his massive crown
And aiming it at Bessie Brown,
Went headlong for the breach!

Never, I ween, did bowler
Sustain a whang so great
As Bessie's lunch and ticket punch
Brought down upon his pate.
As bends a mighty oak-tree
When winter's wind blows loud,
His strength defied, all glassy-eyed,
With dented helm, the City's pride
Reeled back into the crowd.

Then blanched each lithe accountant,
Each livid clerk went white,
And even the boldest typist
Shrank from the awful sight.
Back leapt the bold conductress
And swiftly pressed the bell,
And off she bore the fifty-four
And lunch and punch as well.

And in the transport shelter
When the tea winks in the cup,
When the cigarettes are lighted
And the change is reckoned up,
To shouts and acclamations
Long will the tale be told
How Bessie Brown rode into Town
In the brave days of old.



THE STRANGER IN NUREMBERG

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done

Monday, November 19th.—House of Commons: An Announcement Causes Ire.

Tuesday, November 20th.—House of Lords: Demob. (contd.).

House of Commons: Heat, Light and Sound.

Wednesday, November 21st.—House of Lords: Maiden Over. Fog.

House of Commons: Electors, Jurors and Things.

Thursday, November 22nd.—House of Commons: Foreign Affairs.

Monday, November 19th.—It was Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, who, as A/Prime Minister and Leader of the House of Commons, manages to combine geniality and toughness into an engaging manner, complained that there had not been enough "major rows" for his liking. The House, always ready to oblige one so generally popular, seemed to take this private grief of the Leader's to heart and was clearly determined that, this week, no such complaint should be justified.

Thus it came about that the only hearty and general cheer of the week was that accorded to Mr. Speaker CLIFTON BROWN on his return from a short illness.

As soon as questions were ended Mr. MORRISON got up and announced that the Government intended to nationalize a whole string of industries—coal-mining, electricity and gas supply, transport. But not shipping, and very likely not iron and steel.

He added that any of these industries that failed to put their best into them in the interval before they became Government Departments would pay a fine in the form of reduced compensation.

At least, that is the interpretation, the Conservatives put on his words, and one of the "major rows" for which the Leader of the House so longed was instantly produced for his inspection and approval.

Mr. OLIVER LYTTTELTON leaped up with a demand for a debate, only to be told by Mr. MORRISON that he saw no reason for this, as the recent debate on the King's Speech had offered an excellent opportunity, which had been neglected by the Conservatives. It was, said the Leader, severely, not his duty—

We shall never know *what* was not his duty, because a great roar of fury rose from the Cons. benches, to be answered by a greater roar of triumph from the Lab. benches.

Nettled, Mr. LYTTTELTON remarked

that it was easy to make a Parliamentary point, and Mr. MORRISON proceeded to give one free sample instalment of his world-famed Course of Parliamentary Procedure in Two Easy Lessons. This produced cries of "Don't lecture us!" from the Conservatives, and the retort from the Leader that if the Conservatives did not know their job they *must* be lectured. Which was magnanimous of him, seeing that their job is to oppose his plans.

Sir PETER MACDONALD scored the only bull on the Governmental target with a crisp demand to be told when



TOO LATE

"If the Opposition did not discharge its functions in the debate on the Address it is no part of my business to help them to do so."

Mr. Morrison in reply to Mr. Lyttelton.

Ministers were going to find time for a solution of the really urgent problems of housing and demobilization if they used so much time on nationalizing things.

This produced another instalment of major row, and then Mr. LYTTTELTON startled the House by asking for permission to move the adjournment as a protest. The move was startling not because of its originality but for its apparent ignorance of the fact that the debate on the adjournment could not be used to discuss legislation. Mr. Speaker speedily repaired this gap in Mr. LYTTTELTON's knowledge and that was the end of that.

An unexciting debate on the Budget followed, with Mr. HUGH DALTON, Chancellor of the Exchequer, explaining that a Post-War-Tax-Credit bird in the hand was worth several in the bush, and that therefore critics were wrong who complained that taxpayers who had their tax cut by 1s. in the £ but lost their post-war credits were really worse off. The argument became very involved, mathematical and metaphysical, and the critics gave in for the sake of peace and quiet.

Later, Mr. DALTON, replying to a point made by Mr. I. J. PITMAN, promised to help him raise a public subscription to alleviate the sufferings of any surtax payer with eleven children of school age.

Tuesday, November 20th.—Mr. BRENDAN BRACKEN and Mr. HAROLD MACMILLAN took their seats to-day, having won by-elections which reversed their defeats at the General Election. The appearance of these two doughty fighters heartened their fellow-Conservatives, without unduly depressing the Labour Members.

Question-time was not of an inspired order, except for two bright pieces: one when Mr. Speaker told Major JOHN FREEMAN (who, for once, was not a model of conciseness) that "supplementary questions are much more effective if they are short and snappy," and the other when the irrepressible, monosyllabic, and highly-explosive Mr. RUPERT DE LA BERE (affectionately known as the Atomic Bomb of the Conservative Benches) offered to "assist" Major FREEMAN in the matter of short and snappy supplementaries.

Then Mr. Speaker announced something new in gambling-games—a ballot for the right to raise debates on the adjournment. Those who were unsuccessful, said he, could have another go later. Inveterate adjournment-debaters like Mr. TOM DRIEBERG looked a trifle depressed, clearly thinking that some amendment or possibly repeal of the Laws of Chance was called for.

The succeeding debate on transitional laws (whatever *they* are) produced a great deal of heat and sound, but not much light. Major BOYD-CARPENTER expressed the view that the Bill before the House would solve the unemployment problem among lawyers for sons to come. The Minister of Labour blushing took a curtain or two.

In the Lords, a crisp debate on demobilization produced nothing new, except another promise that release from the Forces would be as speedy as the delivery of coal, and similar military duties, permitted.

Wednesday, November 21st.—The House of Lords to-day had a maiden



"And so I have just postponed his release group for a thousand years."

speech from Lord HENDERSON (better known, as the gossip-columns used to say, as Mr. WILLIE HENDERSON) on the subject of ancient monuments. As one of the architects of the victory of the Labour Party at the polls, his Lordship showed a healthy interest in that other architecture which, as he rather poetically put it, makes this England (or, in modern phrase, this Britain) what it is. He earned general cheers by promising that ancient houses turned—by taxation—into unoccupied houses would not be allowed to fade out through neglect.

In the Commons it was rather like a broadcast of the sitting of the House, for November fog had invaded, and it was impossible to see from one end of the House to the other. Familiar voices would come out of the murk, inquiring about sardines, or the state of affairs in Persia, or the future of the atomic bomb, but nobody saw anybody else.

It was noted that the well-known voice of Mr. DAVID KIRKWOOD had returned, and it boomed through the fog like a sound-beacon. A roar from

the crowded benches announced (so your scribe's commentator on the spot avers) the arrival of the Prime Minister, fresh back from Washington and stations north.

When Mr. Speaker called Mr. GEORGE THOMAS to ask a question, he was not to be seen and had to shout his way into his rightful place. Having done this, he found that Sir BEN SMITH, the Food Minister, had lost the answer to the question. However, with the aid of a few fog-signals and things, matters were put right. The debate—on electors' and jurors' lists—did but little to dissipate the fog. In fact some unkind critics alleged that it added to its opaqueness. But, in the end, there were sounds of people going home, so presumably the House rose, duty done.

Thursday, November 22nd.—Mr. HERBERT S. MORRISON and Mr. WINSTON S. CHURCHILL having conducted a neat little private war across the table, *in re* the earlier statement on nationalization, it was arranged that way should be made for the debate on international affairs.

So Mr. ATTLEE, who got a loud cheer from all parts of the House, explained what had occurred in Washington between himself and President TRUMAN on atomic bombs and war and peace. It was in some respects a gloomy statement, but there shone through it a certain idealistic belief in the ultimate good sense of man, which relieved the gloom. In fact it was as good and as brief a review of a week's conference as any the House has been fortunate enough to listen to for many years.

Then Mr. ANTHONY EDEN added to his list of Parliamentary triumphs a speech which showed how great was his grip of international affairs; and the debate went on.

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Short Short Story

"WILL THE PERSON WHO TOOK BY mistake a quantity of good silk rayon underclothing from a guest room at the Aberdeen Hotel please return? These things cannot be replaced. The above notice was inserted by mistake, as the owner of the clothing had mislaid it herself."

Advt. in Victoria (B.C.) paper.



"I'll hole out with it, my caddie will return with it, you follow up with it, and I'll wait for you all on the green."

Topsy Turvy

VII

TRIX darling of course we'll turn every stone about your Maria Whatisitska, but Haddock says you must tell *more*, my dear what is she, you say *go* to the Russian Embassy, but my deluded rustic there is no Russian Embassy, at least not in the London Telephone Book, there's a *Soviet* Embassy merely, where Haddock says they speak the Soviet language, and of course if she's *Soviet* it seems she might be Georgian, Kamchatkan, Ukrainian, or even Russian, but then again from what you say she might be an *Estonian* or Lithuanian, and in *that* case who knows what, because it seems *nobody* quite knows if they're Soviet or not, anyhow there is an Estonian Legation in the T.B. and

a Lithuanian *likewise*, so perhaps that would be the better avenue, it's *too* confusing, and by the way Haddock says you mustn't talk about a Soviet *national* because that at least can mean *quite* nothing, however darling we'll do our best.

Well, my dear we've just had a rather *jeopardous* adventure, *too* nerve-removing, I must explain that *poor* Haddock like other pubs, and when I say *pubs* darling I of course mean public *men*, not houses, my dear I do think there ought to be an absolute *statue* somewhere to *all* the pubs of England, when you *think* of all the fraying toil they undertake for *quite* nothing, I *definitely* can not envisage *why*, and of course the more you do for nothing the more

the *entire* population seems to think that you've *nothing* to do but to do things for *nothing*, I mean go weakly onto *one* Committee and *half* the Committees in the kingdom swarm upon you, my dear we know men who spend all their *days* in Committee, whether it's Water Boards or *Catchment* Areas or *Saving* Europe or *Improving* Prisons, and my dear getting *quite* nothing out of it but *national* umbrage and premature tuberculosis, my dear Haddock says he knows *three* men who are *quite* never out of the *Chair*, as for Mr. H. himself who is a mere *amateur* and short-time pub, well in the old days he never *deigned* to lecture except too haughtily for a mass of *guineas*, not that he has

the *smallest* urge or even *theme* to lecture about *anyhow*, but now that he's a semi-reluctant pub there is not one Society, Gov. Department or Youth Movement that does not it seems expect him to lecture for nothing *quite all the time*, my dear the letters cascade in daylong, my dear it takes days to say *No* to half of them, not to mention the *lethal* expenditure on stamps, Haddock has a Movement for a *Sixpenny* Post, and *how* the old overdraft is to be equilibrated is not it seems a problem that is taken *too* seriously anywhere outside *this* humble home, however as I was saying like the other pubs *poor* Mr. H. from time to time is cajoled and goaded to speak at a *Savings* Week meeting and from time to time does so because it's the *done* thing, which of course is so spurious because my dear *try* how we may we do not seem to save a *shekel* and one can hear poor Mr. H.'s conscience kicking while he *implores* the charwomen to give up their yachting and oysters and invest their all in these *drab* certificates, besides which I am not positive that he knows *much* more than I do about *inflation* and everything, which is about zero minus 14, anyhow I notice there's rather a *skating* movement when such topics are touched upon, however the *key-point* of this narrative approaches *now*, which is that as you *may* or may not remember for *quite* years he's been *going* on about the taxation of *betting*, which does not *exist*, and of course *now* he says *how* incompatible it is all this *Purchase Tax* on everything you *buy*, all this *murderous* mulcting of everything you *earn*, and all this *pontifical* yap about *saving*, when my dear if you put a *hundred* Peppiatts on some *ludicrous* horse you pay no tax at all, not even if it *rattles* home at 50 to 1 and you win a great *wad* of Peppiatts, which one *has* to agree darling has a *tinge* of *plausibility*, well anyhow *being* invited to address the *Chamber* of Commerce and the *massed* Rotarians of *Burbleton* about saving he said what is the purpose, all those respectables will do the old duty *anyhow*, why if I *must* utter not utter on the *race-course* where I see the *Autumn* Gathering will be proceeding; the *Big Race* is on the identical day, and the untutored proletariat will be *squandering* their hard-earned on *anti-social* and go-slow horses.

Well darling *somewhat* to my surprise and apprehension it was so, my dear we were parked in the *Silver* Ring or somewhere, *too* close to the *loudest* bookies and with a sort of lectern-arrangement like theirs, only of course instead of the *odds* and so

forth our blackboard was all about these dreary *certificates*, well my dear Mr. H. opened fire between the 2.50 and the *Big Race*, with an audience of *about* one man, as a matter of fact I didn't hear *all* his opening speech because I *slipped* away to put a fiver on *Love Lies Bleeding*, which Frank told me could not be beaten, and ten bob each way on *Diadem* for Frank's Nanny, rather a *melting* bookie my dear called *Oats*, and I rather think he was *rather* attracted, we still have *remnants* of the old charm darling, however he said *What's* the old bloke belly-aching about lady, which being a reference to my only husband I explained the *Savings* Message *briefly* with the *result* my dear that Mr. Oats went *quite* purple and began yelling *Ten* to one the *Field* don't forget the *Old Firm* lady *Come* to us and you'll have something to *save*, in which I must say I did see the *point* don't you, so then I went back to Haddock who *stung* and galvanized was shouting madly about *certificates* and two and a half per cent., which *works* out I gather my dear at about *two* to one after eight years, and the cries of *ten* to one the field and *100* to 8 *Diadem* did somehow have a more convincing *ring*, well by this time a rather *acidulous* little crowd had massed round Haddock, my dear some *quite* unChristian and muscular categories, as a matter of fact I *might* have heard my bonhomous Mr. Oats say something about *Handle* him lad to one of his own henchmen, who had a face my dear *exactly* like a whale's ear, anyhow it was *too* clear that the *sense* of the audience was not *utterly* with Haddock, *things* were being audibly said *quite* alien to the *Savings* Movement, I mean when Haddock got to *inflation* and everything a man would sing out *Forty* to one *Inflation*, or *Six* to four on *Thrift*, *too* out of keeping, and one man shouted *Send* for the *police*, which I thought was a *little* harsh on the envoy of the State, well presently there was a rather *pointed* little rush towards the lectern, so of course *all* the mother-bird in me rose up at once, I *sprang* to the side of my poor threatened pub and began a private yell of my *own*, my dear I can not record all the things I said to those citizens, my dear *Parasitical* louts was about the most *unprovocative* of all my assertions, and of course the *laughable* thing was that suddenly I found I was *too* serious about the *entire* *Savings* Movement, my dear if you could have *seen* those *uncivic* creatures with their *wads* of Peppiatts and greedy eyes, and my dear the *entire* paraphernalia of horsering is so pseudo when you come to think

of it, my dear not *one* of those avaricious *sportsmen* had ever touched a horse I *swear*, and of course the *other* laugh was that *whatever* I said about their antecedents and *obscene* appearance I *rather* think they were *rather* attracted, indeed Haddock says that with the little eyes flashing and everything, and I'd got on my new blue two-piece, 18 coupons, the old form was definitely *recaptured*, anyhow they were as mute as newts, and fortunately the *Big Race* beginning they dispersed at last with a few rude cries of *Forty* to one *Inflation*, well *then* my dear to *crown* all as *perhaps* you remember my *adored* *Love Lies Bleeding* came in *quite* first, with *Diadem* a good *second*, so in rather an *astringent* silence I collected *fifty* Peppiatts from the unamused Mr. Oats, who said *sultrily* *Mind* you *save* it lady, and as a matter of fact I have bought *three* or four of Haddock's *insipid* certificates, which is more than Haddock has, so all's well, etcetera, but what a *day*, farewell your battling Topsy.

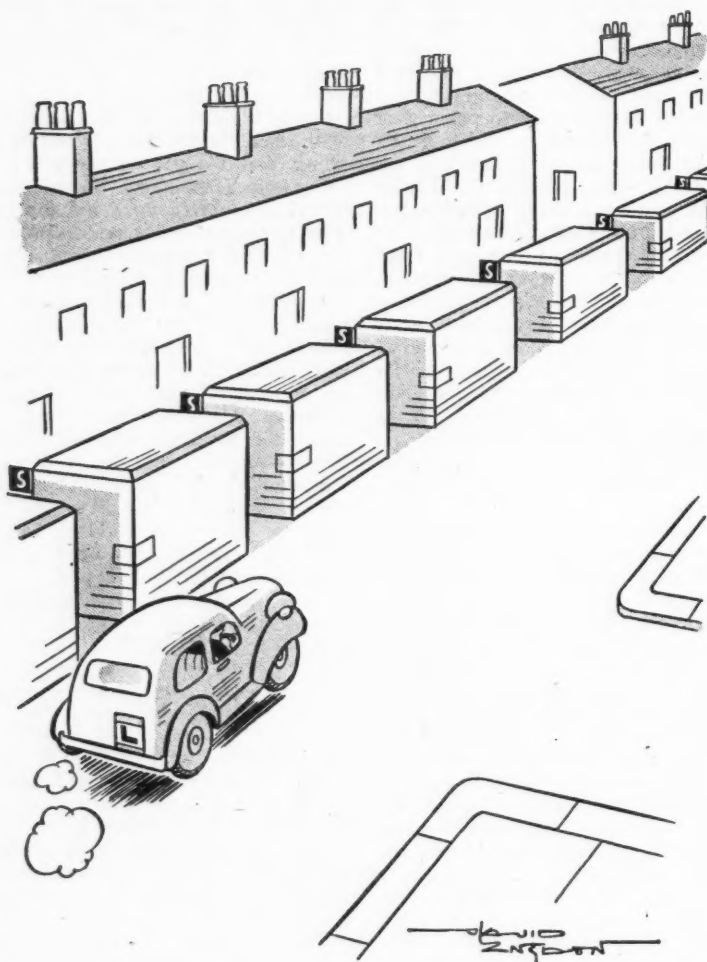
A. P. H.

Das Sailing

NAVAL Party 20000 at Bad Sauerkraut is situated further from the sea than any other Naval H.Q. ever has been in recorded history, and this tends to make us more nautical than life-size and causes us to clutch violently at anything approaching the maritime, even inland water.

The nearest inland water all in one piece is a lake called the Kartoffelsee, about thirty miles away. It is a very large and very shallow lake with two or three ex-German yacht-clubs on its shores, and some more than passable sailing dinghies and boats belonging to them. Our All-conquering Army in their Irresistible Onrush wisely found time to liberate these amenities, but at first did not realize the effect of leaping into very lightly built craft in Service boots and full equipment. The boat-population is therefore somewhat lower than it might have been, but we have told the Pongoes about this now, and beyond capsizing the craft in their boyish way from time to time everything is under control.

So great is our need for the sight of wide waters and the sound of the wind whistling through the rigging that absolutely all the Wrens, most of the R.N.V.R., and even some of the straight-stripe R.N. go sailing with regularity, in spite of the difficulties, which are (a) to get transport and



"A little faster, please—I didn't mean there'd ALWAYS be a small boy darting out from behind EVERY one of them."

(b) to find the Kartoffelsee itself. As regards (a) no final solution has been forthcoming, but the quickest and most successful method yet evolved is to secure an aeroplane and fly to Denmark, where at a place which I may not reveal there is a dump of discarded German cars, secure and repair one, motor down to Brussels and persuade the Army to allot it to the Navy, and then motor back here to Bad Sauerkraut and persuade the Navy in the form of Captain Black, R.N., to allot it to you. To those who know Captain Black it will be apparent that the earlier manoeuvres are, in comparison, child's play made easy for beginners. Difficulty (b)—the actual finding of the Kartoffelsee—is *really* hard, and the only rule that offers even a prospect of

success is to go in the opposite direction to that indicated on all signboards, except the third and the eighth (I think); but from time to time a bridge is down or something and you have to go back and look for a place called "Umleitung," which is sometimes there and sometimes not. This is thwarting to a degree, but on the other hand there is an advantage in the involuntary length of the journey, because the way lies through one of the most interesting little districts in Germany, called Bunkreis or, in English, the Bun Country. It takes its name from the habit of the married female natives of doing their hair in a tight plaited protuberance built forward—"corbelled out" is the technical term—on the middle of their

foreheads in the form of a bun. They tend to have rather homely faces in these parts anyhow, and this sudden and oddly-placed piece of coiffure makes them even harder on the pupil than nature has decreed. In my opinion, the object of the exercise is to render themselves virtuously repellent to all men other than their husbands, who presumably have the intermittent privilege of seeing the bun uncurled and therefore of giving the eye a stand-easy. In favour, however, of the Bun women, it must be said that they all wear peasant costume with skirts of a violent and admirable red, said by some to be made from demobilized Nazi flags, though I think not. To those who have seen German women of equal tonnage and maturity wearing what one presumes they consider to be the latest thing in Paris fashions, it will be apparent that, bun or no bun, the peasant rig wins in a brisk canter.

Apart from the joys of Bunland, however, one also passes through a village in which there is a stork's nest on the chimney of an ancient cottage. This is an unfailing draw and leads to a quite desirable fraternization as one inquires from the Bunfrau (a) whether the stork and young like being kippered; (b) whether she likes this obstruction to her flues; this leads naturally to talk of other heavenly visitations such as aeroplanes and bombs, etc., and so ultimately towards a fruitful lecture on the Evils of War. I gather incidentally that Bunland folklore insists on a stork's nest on, in and around one's chimney being lucky to a degree. I also notice that there are more children in this particular village than anywhere else I have ever been, even in Germany. I feel that, for the romantic, we have got something here, but the precise connection between buns, storks, luck and children wants further working out.

To come back to, or rather to arrive at, sailing. This follows the usual drill. One is becalmed, hot and happy, or soured, cold and happy. But happy it is, either way. As Third Officer "Bung" McKillick remarks "Are we conquerors or are we? If so, do conquerors *work*? Let's go sailing." So I'm off to-morrow again, and some German will probably re-arm or something dreadful while I'm away. I propose to attend to him in the winter.

Real Peace-time Christmas Ahead

"GOOD NEWS

DOG BISCUITS FOR ALL"

Notice in grocer's shop.

At the Play

"THE GAMBLER" (EMBASSY)

WHAT a boon that railway to Moscow has been to the Russian school! Dramatists whose characters found its modest charges beyond their reach were able to involve them in gruelling discussion of the tragic implications of this restriction, while those with slightly wealthier material disposed of anyone superfluous by simply calling a droshky and rushing him to the nearest station. In similar difficulties British dramatists of the same period were falling back on the humane oblivion of appointments in the Colonial Empire, but the Russian method was neater and had an air of finality about it which the other lacked.

I raise the question of this railway not because I still hold any of its debentures but because, in this play by Mr. NORMAN GINSBURY from the story of Dostoevsky, the most entertaining character is firmly given her single ticket at the end of the second act to the bourn from which no Russian theatrical traveller returns; and that is a fair instance of what is wrong with a piece for which there is nearly much to be said. It shows how an upright young tutor to a military family is debauched and finally crazed by his passion for roulette, but for the first two acts it is very difficult to say what or whom it is all about. There is the mounting excitement of the bankrupt general at the cheering eye-witness accounts which come in from the death-bed of his rich aunt, culminating in the arrival of the aunt herself, in rude health; the aunt's disastrous plunge at the Casino, not unamusing but taking up most of the second act; the general's approaches to a new French mistress; the love-affairs of his stepdaughter; and the hopeless adoration conceived for her by the tutor.

All these themes go round and round and in and out and off to their private cul-de-sacs until the plot resembles the marshalling yard at Hamm when Bomber Command had finished with it. Only in the third act does the

tutor emerge as the hero for whose tragic doom of being broken on the wheel we are asked to disregard the futures of all the others. It is by then too late, and we observe with detachment the crazed young man ignoring the outstretched arms of the stepdaughter to totter back to the tables.

Much of the background, moreover, is flimsy. The general, a rather nebulous person, has been lent vast sums of money by a bogus French marquis, and the reason for such philanthropy from a man who is



THE OLD LADY SHOWS HER METTLE.

General Boris Zagoriansky MR. ARTHUR YOUNG
 Alexei Ivanovitch MR. HUGH BURDEN
 Baboulinka MISS MARY MERRALL

painted throughout as the ace of cads is never explained, at least to my comprehension. Nor is the stepdaughter's character at all consistent; I am still unable to decide whether she is much wronged, almost without moral sense, or merely very stupid.

On the other side of the medal there are genuinely dramatic scenes, some entertaining incident and an ambitiously colourful production on which the Embassy, Mr. SEBASTIAN SHAW (producer) and Miss MOLLY McARTHUR (décor) are to be commended. Acting, medium, with outstanding performances by Miss MARY MERRALL as the aunt and Mr. HUGH BURDEN as the tutor. ERIC.

"TO-MORROW WILL BE DIFFERENT"
(LINDSEY THEATRE AND ARTS CLUB)

I will not go so far as Mr. Bevin and stake my career, but I will say that if ever any West End theatres again become vacant I shall be surprised if a run is not in store for this tragi-comedy about an aristocratic Brazilian family, stage cousins to the Sangers and the Tchegov brigade, going picturesquely to the dogs in their ancestral mansion, turned boarding-house, in Rio. It is a quick, noisy, outrageous and frequently confused

impression, but it is moving and in parts extremely funny. Clare is the only member of the family who is proof against the general rot, and the vicissitudes from which she emerges determined to shoulder her responsibilities are not altogether convincing. The tragic elements in the play, her brother's murder of his mistress, her own forbidden marriage to a mulatto and subsequent widowhood, her renunciation of her coloured baby and final decision to take it back, all have dramatic quality but are not fully sustained, mainly because it is very difficult to sustain anything for long in what is practically a private asylum. The play also suffers from emotional repetition in the states of mind of Clare's brothers, but some overlapping of character is almost inevitable in so rich a mixture. And there is no doubt about its richness. Mr. PASCHOAL CARLOS MAGNO has a keen sense of situation and he writes dialogue distinguished by

wit of an agreeable dryness.

Miss HERMIONE HANNEN has no easy task with Clare, and plays her with an intensity which verges at times on stiffness but which by its sincerity does much to steady the rocking ship. Miss ELLEN POLLOCK is a riot as the ex-comedy queen who has mothered this uncomfortable brood, and as the shameless and reluctant master of a tottering dynasty Mr. ESME PERCY is in fine form. ERIC.

Another Displaced Person

"Earl W)fl21x246 (Cons), referring to the mass displacement of persons now taking place in Europe . . ."—London daily.



"Must you do homework every evening, dear?"

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

The Listener

AFTER fifty years of poetry—he was one of the best-loved and most elusive of the "Georgian poets"—WALTER DE LA MARE begins to hint, like Prospero, of a farewell to his magic island of voices. In his latest volume, *The Burning Glass* (FABER, 7/6), he speaks of himself as an old man watching the sun go down, "pining for peace, assurance, pause and rest." These are sad words to anyone who cares for English poetry, for Mr. DE LA MARE's territories are his own—he is the only guide to the ranges of his imagination where:

"No map shows my Jerusalem,
No history my Christ . . ."

In these new verses he shows that he still has the best musical ear of any living writer—sensitive to the faintest echo, the least drip or fall of sound; "Absence," "The Burning Glass," "The Unrent Pattern," and "Thou Art My Long-Lost Peace" are particularly lovely. And of course WALTER DE LA MARE, at seventy, is still the poet of *Peacock Pie* and, behind that, still the little boy who crawled under the table to find out the colour of spiders' eyes (they were green). His world has always been a place of immense, disquieting solitudes. Travellers knock at doors which no one opens, beauty crumbles into dust, questions are shouted out but not answered, and behind the fantastic figures of John Mouldy or Miss T. there is always another companion who seems to expect a welcome—Death. To find comfort and refuge the poet has turned to the delights of childhood and, in his dreams, to "the waters of no-more-pain." But even then (to quote from one of his prose passages) "there is a state of mind at the coming of which and with no warning, the demon of the egocentric may skulk in and cross his shank bones at the hearthside. Then we are truly alone." We cannot penetrate his loneliness. We can only listen and admire.

P. M. F.

The Mass Mind

In *The Vulgar Heart* (CASSELL, 15/-) Mrs. DORIS LANGLEY MOORE examines, in an honest, fair-minded and independent spirit, though perhaps too diffusely, the degrading effect of public opinion on the individual. Individuals, she says, are more rational and certainly far kinder than the institutions which are supposed to represent their collective conscience—that is to say, than the law, the government, the press and the organized churches. But out of indolence and fear and a desire to be sheltered from the dangers and rigours of isolation, the individual allows himself to be absorbed into the mass, and to be governed by the illusions and over-simplifications of the mass mind. In the course of her vast survey of collective irrationalism Mrs. MOORE deals with war and patriotism, the relations of the sexes, eastern and western attitudes to death, and the current glorification of the lower classes, for which she blames the privileged classes, "who prefer flattering the creators of their wealth and keeping them low, to acknowledging their wretched condition and raising them up." There is a good deal of incidental humour to lighten the weight of her general indictment, as when, by way of illustrating the magic effect of certain wordson the popular mind, she quotes a headline "MOTHER WINS HISTORIC HORSE-RACE." "My inductive faculties are slow," she writes, "and I did not instantaneously discover that the lady in question was the owner, not the understudy, of a horse."

H. K.

Diplomatic Memories

Water Under the Bridges (HODDER AND STOUGHTON, 12/6) was written when the doctors had given Sir NEVILLE HENDERSON only a few months to live, and he explains that the story of his life, put together out of his head, in such circumstances, could only result in a "second-rate affair." He need not have apologized: these reminiscences make an excellent introduction to his *Failure of a Mission* and, incidentally, carry no sign of depression. Sir NEVILLE had thirty-four years of service abroad, nine different posts, fourteen chiefs. Russia was his first appointment, at the close of 1905, when the Russo-Japanese war was just over and we were not exactly popular at St. Petersburg. He stayed there, with an interval in Tokyo, until a month or two before the Great War, when he moved to Rome. Thence he was sent to Nish, which had become the seat of the Serbian Government, and then on to Paris, where he served under three chiefs, Sir Frank Bertie, Lord Derby, and Lord Hardinge of Penshurst. Post followed post in the years between the two wars, and in 1937 he was transferred for the last time to Berlin. And he maintains stoutly that the advice he gave to the Government in 1938 was right. He accepts gladly the title of "A Man of Munich," confident in the verdict of posterity. *Water Under the Bridges* is good reading from start to finish, and an astonishing book to have been written without diaries and papers, and under the shadow of death.

L. W.

Problem Story

Seven Were Hanged (GOLLANCZ, 5/-) is described as "An Authentic Account of the Student Revolt in Munich University," and its compiler, Mr. WILLIAM BAYLES, vouches for the accuracy of the facts. As one reads the bitter little story of a brave effort made by students and a few professors and returned soldiers on behalf of freedom of mind and spirit one wishes it were untrue, and this for two reasons. The first is because it is heartbreaking to have the sickening truth about German

Party methods repeated again, the second because it adds to the discomfort of the question "What would you have done were you a German?" asked by Miss Eleanor Rathbone in the preface to the book. As a story it makes thrilling reading. We are given the pictures of a few young students (among them a girl of seventeen) who had been members or leaders of the Hitler Youth gangs and had gradually grown disgusted. We are shown how they met to conspire, and plotted by insinuation and hint—since outspoken words were too dangerous—to wage a war of leaflets. The little war ended after bombs containing leaflets had exploded during a speech made to the students by the Gauleiter when he was glorifying the deaths at Stalingrad. Arrests, mock trials and death followed. For a short time the scaffold at Munich stood as monument to "intellectual freedom and human dignity." Yes, it is very hard reading, but deserves to be read, even though we may never be able to separate the goats from the lambs.

B. E. B.

On Top of the World

Eskimos are tremendous footballers. If we could induce them to visit us (when the Dynamos have finished generating goals) we should have to revise our code a little, for a whole village will often turn out against another, when the game, played under the aurora borealis of a long Arctic night, will range over anything up to five miles, the goals being scored in the rival villages. I take this exciting information, shaming to our decadence, from a rich vein of hyperborean lore, *Eskimoland Speaks* (MUSEUM PRESS, 12/6), in which Mr. W. B. VAN VALIN recounts his experiences first as a teacher and then as an archaeologist. He has the utmost respect—and with reason—for people who remain cheerful, hospitable and courageous, inveterate dancers and laughers, in spite of a steady battle with cold such as it is difficult to contemplate. They inhabit a sportsman's paradise and are mighty hunters, when the weather allows. They eat often and heavily of meat and fat (vegetarianism is unknown), their menus being relieved by such delicious *bonnes bouches* as predigested clams from the stomachs of newly-slain walrus (one for the Wine and Food Society!); but the search for game is hard and dangerous, and if the icebox happens to be empty when a blizzard starts a family may sit starving in its igloo for weeks on end. Much of the book is about hunting, to which everything in Alaska comes back, and the intelligent boy should welcome it for Christmas. An index, good photographs and a map are helpful inclusions.

E. O. D. K.

A Baconian

The theory that Bacon wrote the plays of Shakespeare appears to have a peculiar attraction for men distinguished rather for practical competence and the honourable discharge of their professional obligations than for understanding of poetry and the poetic temperament. In a preface to *The Bacon-Shakespeare Anatomy* (GEORGE LAPWORTH, 15/-) Mr. RODERICK EAGLE gives us an account of its author, the late Dr. WILLIAM STANLEY MELSOME. A scholar of Queen's College, Cambridge, he took a first in the Natural Science Tripos, was invited to play cricket for the University, but declined, owing to pressure of work, was for a time Gynaecologist at London Hospital, and then opened a private practice in Bath, where he died last year at the age of seventy-eight. The photograph which serves as frontispiece completes the attractive impression given by Mr. EAGLE's sketch, but it is one thing to inspire confidence in a sick-room, another to win credence for the theory that Shakespeare and Bacon were the same man.

Here are some of the proofs adduced by Dr. MELSOME. Bacon wrote—"The king had gotten for his purpose two INSTRUMENTS, Empson and Dudley." Shakespeare wrote—"What poor an INSTRUMENT may do a noble deed." Bacon wrote—"Health consisteth in the UNMOVABLE CONSTANCY & FREEDOM from PASSION." Shakespeare wrote—"Give me the man that is not PASSION's slave" and "Bring me a CONSTANT WOMAN." Bacon, like *Hamlet*, lacked advancement; but "we have no evidence that William of Stratford was a courtier. Is it not strange, therefore, that he should write: 'The art o' the court, as hard to have as keep.'" And so on.

H. K.

"Le Ruskin de nos Jours"

Amid the wreckage of so much that is beautiful left behind by the whirlwind of war in its passing, it is good to know that Venice stands unscathed. Mr. ADRIAN STOKES, the illustrations to whose *Venice: An Aspect of Art* (FABER, 10/6) were collected while the fate of Shelley's "ocean's nursling" yet hung in the balance, devotes a great part of his book to a descriptive commentary upon them, and it is this part, no doubt, which will interest the majority of his readers. Among the photographs themselves may be specially noted those of the Campo San Geremia, the Sottoportico San Cristoforo with its alluring lights and shades, the doorway to San Aponal and its lovely kneeling figure, and the entrance of the Abbazia San Gregorio. The latter part of the book is devoted to a consideration of the art of Giorgione, and to a summing-up of the system of aesthetics which Mr. STOKES has built up around and upon his new version of the Stones of Venice. Briefly, his credo appears to be, not "Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty," but rather "Beauty is Beauty, and Truth is Truth, and never the twain shall meet"—a dogma, on the whole, as chilly and depressing as the most rigid and uncompromising of religious formulæ.

C. F. S.



"That'll be the new maid—keep this door shut."



"Which would you prefer, darling: this one and 25 Queen Charlotte Gate, or THIS one and 17A Myrtle Road?"

My Lifetime in Basic Industry

IV—Deadlock in Scowle

ON Tuesday, August 4th 1901, at four o'clock in the morning, my mother rose, as was her wont, to prepare the men's "snapping" or "doggo." I heard the clatter of her clogs, first on the stairs and then against the ribs of my father's whippets asleep before the kitchen fire. Then, as usual, she began to hum "Rock of Ages." She hummed fervently, stressing those words which happened to synchronize with her jabs at the butter and cheese. Upstairs in my little bed I used to imagine during these recitals that I had one ear pressed against the floor of a tram travelling at speed.

My mother reached a triumphant "amen." It was the men's cue to get dressed for the pit. Further sleep was impossible. I lay staring miserably at the stars wishing myself old enough and big enough to take my place at the Orange No. 2 Pit.

Until I heard my mother bellowing from the foot of the stairs I was not aware that routine had been broken for once.

"Caaay-lub! Maaas-ter! Tha'lt be at yon pit when t' coal's all picked, like as not. Up wi' thee! If Ah 'ave t' coom up t' thee . . ."

I listened intently for the sounds that would announce my father's and

Caleb's rising—the creaking and harping of bed-springs, the grunting and yawning, the coughing as my father lit up his first pipe of shag. But none came. There was silence.

Then I heard my father's voice, unctuous and soft.

"Rosie, lass, coom 'ere, luv," he said.

My mother clattered up the stairs two or more at a time and my father muttered his explanation.

"So tha's struck 'as tha?" my mother roared. "Tha great saftie, tha'lt let yon union do owt wi' thee. 'Tis coom t' summat when tha' strikes outa season."

So that was it. I was elated. It meant fun and spectacle in the village. There might be bloodshed even, or arson.

Conditions at the Orange No. 2 Pit had been growing steadily worse for weeks. I knew all about them, for I had been at the disused quarry on Barlow's Pike for all the secret meetings of the union. Once I had been given a penny by Jem Clewlow, the secretary, for keeping a sharp look-out for stray women.

The men's grievances were genuine enough. A break-through of water from an old shaft had flooded most of the working galleries so that the journey to the coal-face had become extremely difficult and trying. My father and my brother Caleb had to wade nearly three miles and swim under water a good two hundred yards to reach their stall. This was not all. Black damp was so prevalent that a man could hardly take three puffs at his pipe before it went out. And explosions had become so frequent in some galleries that intelligent conversation was out of the question. Added to all this was the fact that the plans for the new pit-head baths had been further delayed.

To my immature mind the strike certainly seemed justified.

By noon the village high-street was crowded. Men were digging up cobblestones and carrying them to dumps at the colliery gates. There was a rumour that blacklegs were at work.

I shall never forget the excitement as we stood watching those gates. At twelve-thirty when the day shift ended each miner took a cobblestone and raised it to shoulder-height. Every eye was on the little door in the wooden gate.

Suddenly the latch clicked and a nervous silence spread through the crowd. The door opened slowly and a large sheet of corrugated tin was pushed through it into the street. Then a face appeared, the face of my grandfather Ebby. He took quick anxious looks to left and right before he realized that more than five hundred pairs of eyes were on him. Then, with one leg through the opening he stopped abruptly like a rabbit caught in the glare of powerful head-lamps. The waiting mob burst into a roar of laughter and old Ebby hopped back through the doorway, leaving behind what would otherwise have been a roofing section for his new photographic dark-room.

The strike dragged on week after week and the women of Scowle grew more and more bitter towards their menfolk. In October our last remaining

source of income dried up, for as soon as she heard of the stoppage my sister Marion (who worked for Lawyer Fishwick in Ashbridge) decided to strike in sympathy. She made a seventh mouth round our poor table.

But there was always the pawnshop. Each morning, after breakfast, my mother made a tour of the house and examined every movable object. On some articles she would chalk a cross. My father and my brother Caleb were responsible for the haulage.

One day my father found his pick among the branded goods. It was a terrible shock to his pride. I shall never forget the forlorn figure he presented as he sat on the kitchen floor, sobbing, with the cold steel of the pick pressed against his cheek. I sobbed with him.

My mother's cruelty not only shocked my father, it shocked the whole village. Even Mrs. Hunslett, the checkweighman's wife, said that my mother had gone too far.

"Deprivin' a mon on 'is pick's like robbin' 'im on 'is self-respect," she said.

Until this incident occurred some substitute for affection had always existed between my parents. Now the rupture seemed complete. My mother was asked to resign from the Women's Institute while my father was made a life-member of the Scowle Amateur Football Club.

But the deadlock showed no signs of breaking. The owners were quite ready for conciliation, but there was not one among them who dared venture into Scowle to discuss terms. Daily bulletins were still being issued about the condition of the two Ashbridge policemen who had been sent to Scowle to reinforce old Chalmers.

In the end it was my grandfather Ebby who saved the situation. For two days and nights he walked alone on the fells wrestling with the problem. Then on the third day he descended wild-eyed and wind-blown into the valley where he immediately called a meeting of the union. At first his proposals were treated with derision, but his persistence and tact eventually secured him minority support and backing for a ruse unexampled in the history of industrial relations.

On the following Saturday the Ashbridge *Evening Star* carried a remarkable photograph on its front page. It showed a barge drawn up at the Scowle wharf of the Midlands and Grand Trunk Canal, a barge packed from stem to stern with a cheering, waving mass of people. The caption read:

"The first hundred and fifty of the 2,793 inhabitants of Scowle who have decided to emigrate to America. The happy party in the above picture left by canal for Bristol yesterday."

On Sunday, at the end of morning service, eight directors of the Ashbridge and District Colliery Co. were waiting at the door of the Scowle Mission Hall. In less than ten minutes a new agreement was drawn up. It reduced hours of work by thirty per cent. and raised wages by threepence an hour. The company agreed to recognize the union and the men decided to recognize the company. On Monday Scowle was back at work.

My grandfather Ebby was made a freeman of the village, and at the ceremony he announced that work on the extension of the Midlands and Grand Trunk Canal from Scowle to Bristol had been indefinitely postponed. That got a big laugh. Hod.



Last M.E.F. Letter

(From Captain Lionel Conkleshill to his wife)

CAIRO MAIN STATION,
November 4th

DEAR EDITH,—Simpson and I are sitting on our luggage on Cairo Main Station drinking in our last whiffs of this part of the fragrant East. The past week has been one of the most anxious of our long and arduous Army career, with deferments and underferments following in rapid succession.

It started when we found our chief gazing with glassy eyes at a signal saying that 21 Group would not finish going out until February, whereas he had previously hoped to get rid of us in November.

Next morning we heard him singing snatches from *Carmen* in his office, and he called us in with a beaming face to say that we were going in about a week, after all, as they were taking those who had been longest in the Middle East first. Simpson and I have been here quite a long time. As he often remarks when in a poetical mood, we came here as blithe and carefree youths, and we go home as decrepit and senile patriarchs.

The morning after that the chief rang the Naafi bell for strong coffee and then sent for us again.

"Be prepared to be deferred at the last minute," he said. "Somebody Higher Up has got the idea that you might be needed to help cope with the

situation in Palestine." Then he gave a hoarse and rather hysterical laugh and murmured something under his breath about the mentality of people higher up that I am sure he would have regretted in his calmer moments.

Simpson and I began looking round for good secondhand battle-dresses at a reasonable price, having sent our old ones home M.F.O. together with most of our other possessions, but the situation was saved by a timely signal from Palestine saying that they thought the Forces already up there could manage to cope with events without our assistance.

So we repacked everything and bought as many razor blades as we thought the people at the Customs would let us take. We had both written home for lists of things that were short in England so that we could buy supplies of these to tide us over the first few months, but the lists were so long that as there seemed little chance of chartering the *Queen Elizabeth* for our exclusive use, we just bought a few things like shaving-soap, spare razors, shaving-brushes, etc. Simpson is always in a panic of fear that one day he will run out of shaving apparatus and have to go unshaved, but his friends tell him that as he rarely looks as if he has shaved, anyway, it does not really matter.

No more shocks came until this morning, when the Egyptians (who adore Simpson) got wind of the fact that we were going, and determined to

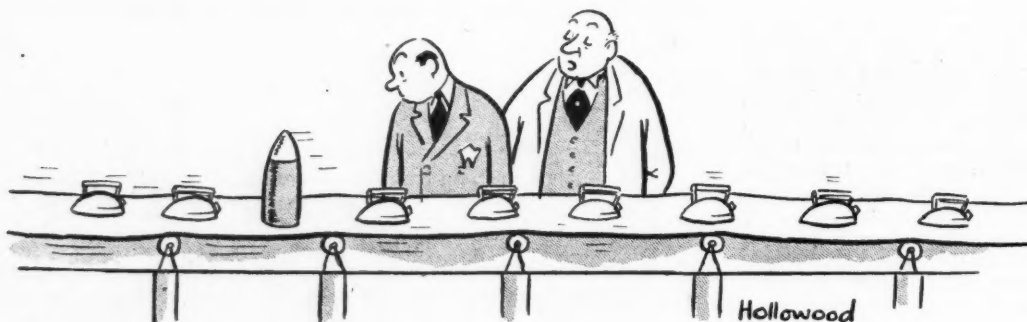
prevent us getting away. I know that other explanations of the recent riots have been put forward officially, but the real reason for them was the determination of the Arab world not to let Simpson escape. And as our car drove through the streets towards the station a noisy mob lined the streets and cheered wildly (at least, Simpson said it was cheering, but it was very much like English booing), and then they rushed the car, no doubt wishing to carry us shoulder-high back to our office.

We eventually got safely to the station, however, and if we can maintain our incognito and escape the worshipping populace in Alexandria we should be on the sea in a couple of days.

Your loving husband, LIONEL.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

MR. PUNCH has been asked to state that the "Peter Rabbit" Christmas Cards, which in normal years are offered for sale on behalf of the Invalid Children's Aid Association, cannot be made available this year. Readers are reminded that cards, issued in aid of the Grenfell Mission, are obtainable from the Secretary, The Grenfell Association, 66 Victoria Street, London, S.W.1. A note about these cards appeared in the issue of *Punch* dated 3rd October, 1945 (page 289).



"Don't let that worry you—it's only one in a hundred and fifty now."

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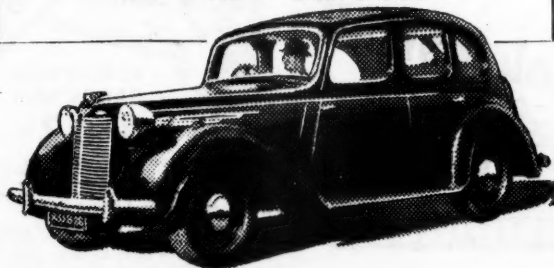
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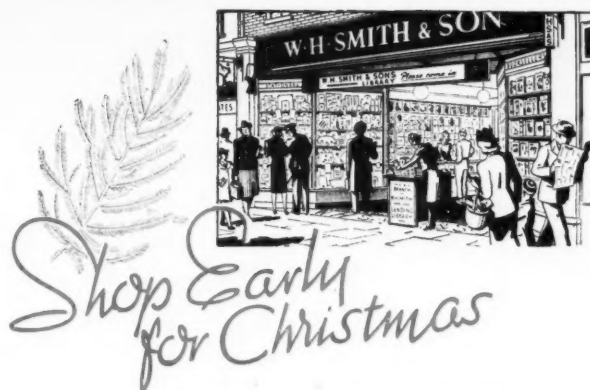
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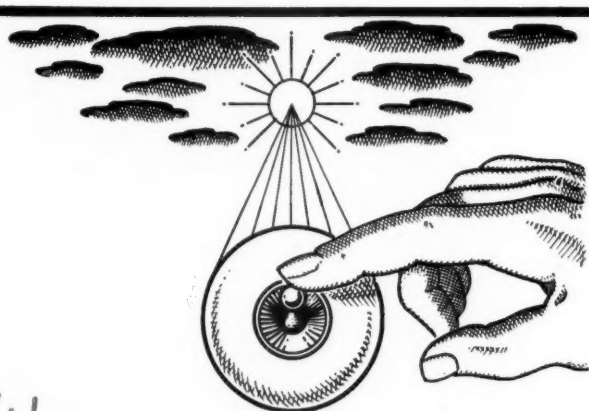
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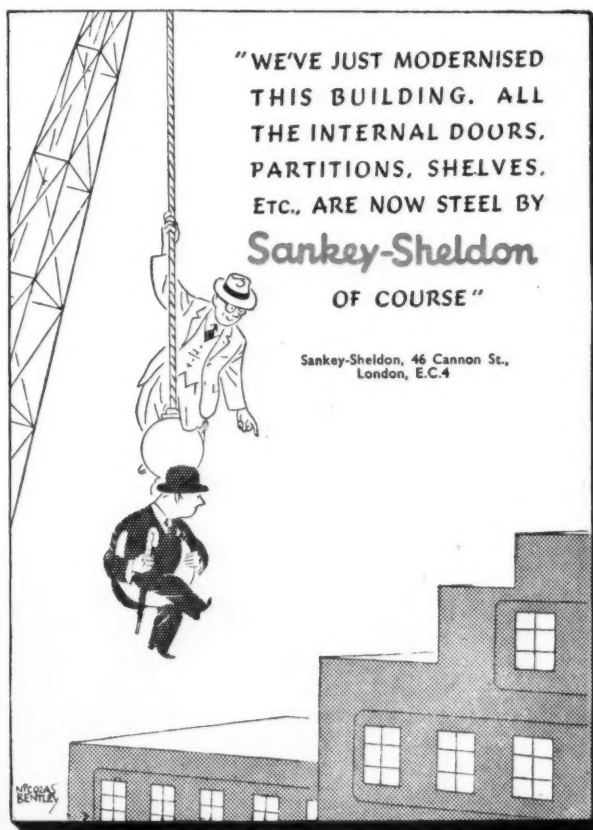
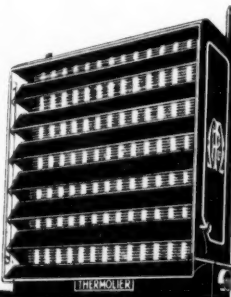


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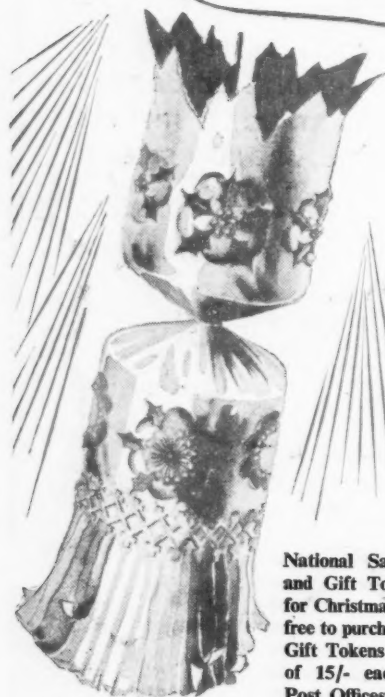


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